

THE CORN LAW  
OF THE  
CORN TRADE  
CONSIDERED:  
IN  
A N S W E R

To all the Objections against the BOUNTY  
granted to encourage the  
EXPORTATION of CORN,

AND

Influence on the Landed and Navigation  
INTEREST clearly and fully Explained.

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*In Copia cautus —*

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1870





## The STATE of the CORN TRADE considered, &c.

IT is a Duty to endeavour to prevent such popular Prejudices as may become popular Evils, it may be a sufficient Apology for this Attempt, which however I wish had been undertaken by some abler Hand.

Whether the Bounty granted to encourage the Exportation of Corn be fit to be continued or not, has lately been the Subject of much Conversation and Debate. We have seen it often controverted in the publick Papers, and a certain anonymous Gentleman has very industriously wrote against it in the *General Evening Posts* of the 23d of July, the 23d of November 1752, and 13th of January 1753, to the first of which I answered

by the same Paper of the 25th of *August* 1752, and had since prepared a Reply to the others; but finding myself under a Necessity to enlarge for the Explanation of some Points, I exceeded the Limits of a publick Paper, and am therefore desired to publish in this Manner a general Reply to the above Letters, and to give some clearer Ideas of the State of the Corn Trade in this Kingdom.

The chief Argument which the Gentleman has advanced against the Bounty is, "That it lessens the Price of our Corn Abroad, and is therefore given away to Foreigners."—This Assertion will appear, when the Matter is fairly stated, to be grounded only in Ignorance of the Trade, and all the Consequences deduced from it must accordingly vanish, tho' I shall do the Gentleman the Justice to reply to all the Parts of his Letters concerning the main Question.—The Illustration brought to support this Argument, by *A* giving *B* five Shillings to sell a Quarter of Corn to *C* at so much less than the Market Price; that *C* has all the Advantage, and not *A* or *B*, is no Representation of the Case, unless the Gentleman could also prove there were no other Countries that could sell Corn to *C*.—Whereas I desire he will please to consider, that *Poland*, *Denmark*, *Hambourg*, *Africa*, *Sicily*, and many other Countries, have for many Years past furnished very large Quantities of Corn to the Places where it has been

been wanted, and at cheaper Rates than could be had from us, notwithstanding the Advantage of the Bounty; and our own Plantations in *America* not only supply a great deal of Corn to *Spain* and *Portugal*, but even come so near to us as *Ireland* and the Bay of *Biscay*, and often undersell us at these Places; so that if the Bounty be withdrawn, we should have no Share of the Trade but in Times of very extraordinary Plenty at Home, and of extreme Want Abroad, which may but seldom happen together; therefore the Bounty of five Shillings, granted on the Exportation of a Quarter of Wheat (which is yet given to our own People, as I shall by and by explain) is necessary, or the afore-mentioned Countries, which are waiting for our halting, will run away with the other Twenty-five; will deprive us of all the Trade, and by that Means will grow more potent by Sea and Land; and *America*, as a natural Consequence, may not long endure Subjection to us.

But the Gentleman asks, “ What is the Meaning of giving the Bounty to our own People? ” In answering this Question it will evidently appear, that either the Bounty must be continued, or there must be a proportionable Reduction of Rents, and that therefore the Bounty is given to our own People, to our Land Owners and Labourers in the Field, one or other must be, that our Corn may go as cheap Abroad as from other Countries, to preserve us the Trade, and as such

a large Reduction of Rents would make strange Havock and Confusion in the Nation; so to avoid these, it is necessary to continue the Bounty, for I think it will plainly appear the Trade is worth preserving. Can it be conceived that the Merchant would give the same Price for Corn without an Assurance of the Bounty; for when he makes an Estimate of the Advantage of exporting Corn from the State of Markets Abroad, he would very rarely find Encouragement for the Undertaking without the Bounty, by which he esteems the Cost so much less'd; for there are divers Charges of collecting and shipping Grain, of Freight, Insurance, and others attending the Sale Abroad, which greatly enhance the Price, and ordinarily make it come dear to the Consumer? Can it either be conceived that if the Price of Corn at Home be reduced in Proportion to the Value of the Bounty, that the Farmer could afford the Expence of Tillage, and to pay still the same Rent, for the Bounty to Corn Lands may be esteemed at a moderate Computation worth Thirty per Cent. ? — And we may reasonably conclude, that the major Part of the Land Owners, upon a Reduction of Rents adequate to the Consequence of the Bounty, would proportionably retrench their ordinary Expences, by which Means a Number of Poor they now employ may be dismiss'd, and become chargeable to their Parishes; nor would the Tradesmen and Mechanicks fail to feel such an Alteration in the Expenses

pences of the Gentlemen likewise.—'Tis in this Way the Bounty is given to our own People, and this is the Channel of its Circulation, which I hope the Objector will now be able to discern.—Some have strangely imagined, that only the Merchant was benefited by the Bounty, whereas he is no more than a Kind of Agent therein for the Country, disbursing first his own Money; so that, provided the Trade be secured to the Kingdom by a Reduction of Rents, it would on many Accounts be an Ease to the Merchant to withdraw the Bounty.—Give me Leave to deviate a little here, and represent the Abuses which the Merchants of the Out-Ports suffer by the bad Payment of this Bounty, which by Act of Parliament is ordered to be discharged within three Months by the Receiver-General at the Custom House in London, for want of Monies arising from the Branches thereto appropriated sufficient to pay the same directly at the Port of Exportation; instead of which, the Payments of late have been often further postponed seventeen Months.—Tho' the Funds may not come in regularly to discharge them when due, they have not generally exceeded more than a Month or two, even in Times of as large Exportation. Such an extraordinary Difference cannot but be Matter of just and great Complaint, especially as it has sometimes been observ'd, that after several large Importations and Duties receiv'd, few or no Debentures have been paid off. If the Monies appropriated

to the Payment of the Bounty on exported Corn are differently apply'd, the Offenders ought to be answerable to the Injured as much as in private Affairs ; or, if the Funds already provided are not sufficient, other Means should be found out, and Care ought to be taken to ease the Sufferers.— As every Purchaser of Corn buys the same at an advanced Price, proportioned to the Benefit of the Bounty which he becomes entitled to on Exportation, so such Purchaser alone suffers the Inconvenience and Hardship of being kept out of the Money this unreasonable Time. And tho' with Respect to its first Grant it is called a Bounty, yet no Insinuation that it is merely such, and the Payment may therefore be postponed, can with Colour of Reason be admitted; for as it is established by the Faith of Parliament, Expectations raised, and Business carried on thereupon, so it becomes a just Debt, and ought as such to be regarded : Wherefore such a Delay of the Payment is an Infringement upon the Right and Liberty of the Subject. And it is the greater Hardship on the Traders of the Out-Ports, that the Port of *London* is exempt from this Difficulty, receiving the Bounty for all the Corn exported thence within a few Weeks after loaden. Some Regulation in this Respect is necessary, and but just and reasonable, that all the Parts of the Kingdom may be more on a Footing ; it being doubtless originally intended, that the Bounty should be as much as possible

possible for the Benefit of one Place as another.

But to return.

This Gentleman replying by his Letter of the 23d of November to mine of the 25th of August, says, I must have been deceived concerning the French having bought large Quantities of Corn from other Countries at cheaper Rates, notwithstanding the Bounty granted here; but the Truth of it, and that other Countries still get a large Share of the Trade from us in France, Portugal, &c. is too well known to be doubted. T'was said, that the Court of France gave Orders last Year for the Purchase of 150,000 Quarters of Wheat, whereof only about one third Part was executed in England, because they found it cheaper elsewhere, otherwise they would undoubtedly have bought more of us, or we might have got a better Price for what we sold them; but because they did not buy all elsewhere, the Gentleman imagines I am deceived; but if we had sold them less or none, it would rather be an Argument of a Necessity to augment than diminish the Bounty, which I allow to be at present such a considerable Object; that it would be hard if it did not in Turn bring us some Buyers; and others may be influenced by Nearness of Situation, tho' at greater Cost. But the Gentleman says, "That France could not buy Corn cheaper elsewhere, if the Bounty was withdrawn." This is a bold Assertion, and an Intimation that no Country but

our own is either plentiful or improveable. But supposing that those Countries, where Corn is often wanted, had no other Way or Means of Supply but from us; yet if an Alteration in our Laws should make such a Necessary of Life much dearer to them, Necessity will even provoke Indolence to Industry, for we must not suppose them to be Kingdoms and Dominions without Waste and improveable Lands, or they may plant with Corn those Lands which now they other Ways employ. *France* finds her present Account in planting Vineyards, and *Ireland* in Raising and Fatting Cattle; but these may no longer be the Cases, when they find no Supply of Corn from us on usual Terms; for Freight and Charges, as before observed, will greatly augment the Cost; and the Gentleman vainly asserts, That we should find the Price Abroad would not only so much exceed the Price at Home, but give Room for the Exporter's Profit too without the Bounty.

The Gentleman argues; That the Bounty makes a Necessary of Life cheaper to Foreigners, and enables them to undersell us in our Manufactures; —But it is impossible to starve them into a higher Price for Corn, unless they had no Dependance elsewhere; therefore if they undersell us for the Back, we must endeavour to undersell others for the Belly. And as Corn with us is as much a Staple Commodity as our Wool; if other Nations rival us in the Woolen Trade, we ought to promote

note that which Providence and our Situation have put into our Hands. But allowing the Gentleman a Part of his Argument, that the Bounty lessens the Price of our Corn Abroad ; yet it is only upon the same Footing as a Reduction of the Price of Materials and Labour would make our Manufactures cheaper to them ; which, I believe, the Gentleman would not esteem given to Foreigners, but only as a Means of securing to ourselves the continued Benefits of the Trade : And if such an Argument be good for all or any of our Manufactures, it is the same, with respect to Corn, for our being able to supply such Manufactures cheaper Abroad, is making the same Reduction to Foreigners that the Gentleman complains of by the Bounty on Corn.

The Complaint made of the large Demands on the Government for the Bounty on Corn, is but a Proof of the immense Sums which have been drawn from foreign Countries for this Commodity, and considering therewith the Freightage by our own Shipping, must together, at a moderate Computation, have annually brought into the Kingdom at least One Million and a Half Sterling for several Years past ; and so much may be esteemed the Returns from Abroad for this Commodity, exclusive of the Profit made by such of our own Merchants as have therein been Adventurers. The Value of such an Exportation must undoubtedly bear a great Proportion to the Increase of the Wealth of the Nation. And as I

think it has been clearly demonstrated, that without the Encouragement given by the Bounty, we should have exported but little Corn ; it is therefore a wanton Expression of the Gentleman, to call the Bounty wantonly expended.

It is asserted, that the Agriculture employs ten Times more Hands than any of our Manufactures ; and I am of Opinion, that the Number abstractedly and extraordinarily employ'd in the Tillage, and so forth, for the Exportation alone, exceeds the Number of People belonging to any one Manufacture of the Kingdom, without considering the superior Influence of the Corn-Trade on our Navigation, in which there is scarce any Comparison. Manufactures are moveable, and often transplanted from one Kingdom and Country to another ; but the Tillage of our Land under the Protection of the Bounty, is a more durable as well as a more extensive and universal Benefit. The Corn-Trade being then a Staple Commodity of the Kingdom, and a Trade employing more Subjects by Land and Sea than any other Trade we have, to prefer inferior Branches to it, can never be for the general Good.

As it is undeniably, that the Countries before-mentioned are improved in the Growth of Corn as well as ourselves, and vye much with us in this Branch of Trade ; so it is evident, that the Corn-Trade of this Nation cannot now be supported

ported without the Bounty ; for we should otherwise lose the Means of bringing immense Sums of Money into the Kingdom, which must greatly lessen both the Employment of the Poor and of our Marine. The Gentleman says, " That being supported by the Bounty, it cannot add to the Riches of the Nation." But as I have before explained the Channel of the Circulation of the Bounty to be within ourselves, and not given to Foreigners ; so it is certain, that the Corn-Trade does increase the Riches of the Nation, tho' supported by the Bounty.

The Gentleman speaking again of the Improvements of our Lands, says, They have not arisen from the Bounty, but from the Improvements in Trade, from the Nature of Farming. If he means that the Improvement of the Corn-Trade Abroad has increased the Value of our Lands, he is right ; but it is vain and idle to say, this has not been owing to the Bounty. If he means that the Nature of Farming has improved our Lands, that is also so far true as Effects follow their Causes. As it is certain, that the Plantation of Corn is of much more general Importance to the Farmer, than Grazing and Fatting Cattle, and employs vastly more Hands ; so such Plantations are the Inducements to Farmers to keep larger Stocks of Cattle, by which the Nation also finds Benefit. To say then, that our Improvements in Tillage, are merely the Effect of keeping larger Stocks

Stocks of Cattle, is to put the Effect in the Place of the Cause. The Gentleman endeavours to make it appear, that the Inducements to plant Corn are entirely owing to the Increase of our Inhabitants; but I believe he will scarce be able to prove, that they are multiplied in Proportion to the Produce of our Lands, for then we should be able to consume all our own Corn as heretofore we did. He rightly adds, that the Increase of our People is owing to the Increase of our Trade: One would think then, that that Trade, which has most increased itself, ought to have the greatest Share of the Honour of it; and what Trade has increased more than the Corn-Trade? I would ask the Gentleman, Whether if the Exportation of Corn be lessen'd, there could possibly be the same Encouragement for the Farmer to plant it, and how the Exportation thereof can be so considerably continued, if the grand Motive and Support be withdrawn? For in Proportion to the Reduction of the Bounty, (without a Reduction of Rents) the Exportation must languish, and in the same Degree must fail the Means of employing the Poor; and how shall we find another Branch of Trade to answer so well the Ends of Government as the Corn-Trade, which, by a Bounty granted, and circulating within ourselves, produces Means to employ the Poor, and increase the Riches of the Nation, and therewith the Value of Lands, which are ready at all Emergencies to bear the Taxes of the State, and

a small Part of such a Tax is sufficient to pay the Bounty on Exported Corn ; considering withal, what I have hinted before, the Havock and Confusion which such an Alteration of Property, as the withdrawing the Bounty, would make amongst us, and how many Persons would be distressed by such a Reduction of the Value of Land : It is therefore certain, that the Interest of the Nation and of the Trader are closely connected by the Bounty ; and the Gentleman's Assertion, that in every Trade, encouraged by Bounties, such Interests are separated, must from hence appear to be extremely wrong ; for it then would follow, that such of our Fisheries, as are encouraged by Bounties, are also a Prejudice to the Nation, which stand upon the same Footing as the Corn-Trade, and would also, without a Parliamentary Encouragement, be entirely run away with by other Countries. And it has been a late and general Complaint, that our Fisheries were neglected ; but as it is impossible to please every body, so the Gentleman, I am here contending with, is one of those still dissatisfied, being so inconsistently frugal, that to save one Penny he would sacrifice the Opportunity of gaining twenty. Upon the same Principles he might reproach the Irish for their *Premiums* to Industry and the Growth of Corn ; for which they are much to be commended, and are therein only following our Steps ; for our Bounty may be considered as a *Premium* to make and continue us a Corn Country. And it has

has happily answer'd the Designs of our wise Ancestors, who, foreseeing the Advantages of improving our Lands, took the Precaution to discourage the Importation of foreign Corn, which would have impeded the Growth of our own. How can the Revenue be better apply'd, than by granting Bounties to encourage Means for employing the Subjects, and especially such as provide also for their plentiful Subsistence at Home, which must necessarily increase our Inhabitants, Strength and Riches upon the Whole? Therefore the Gentleman's Familiar Instance, as he calls it, of five or five Million of Persons joining in a common Stock, is no Representation of the Case at all, as by Means of the Bounty, Money is plentifully brought into the Kingdom, and circulating for the Employment of the Poor, cannot possibly reduce the Stock and Riches of the Nation, but does evidently increase them.

Notwithstanding what the Gentleman says that I have misunderstood another Writer against the Bounty in a Pamphlet, intitld, *National Thoughts recommended to the serious Attention of the Publick, with an Appendix, shewing the Damages arising from a Bounty on Corn,* I shall venture to quote him again, and to repeat, what they both argue against the Bounty, tho' from quite opposite Principles. The grand Thing proved by this Pamphlet being as much in Favour of the Bounty as any could be wish'd for, the Author making it appear from all

Bishop

Bishop Fleetwood's Account of the Market Price of Wheat at Windsor, that it has gradually declined ever since the Bounty took Place; and to support his Argument, he calls this a Loss to the Farmer; surely he did not consider that the extraordinary Product of the Land has more than supply'd the Difference of the Price.—Another Argument which the Author of this Pamphlet uses for taking off the Bounty is, that some Regulation may be made for raising the Price of Spirituous Liquors, to prevent the melancholy Effects that arise from Excess in the Use of them, and to promote the Exportation of them from England; but this upon Examination will not appear a consistent Scheme, and whether it be worthy to be a Competitor with the Exportation of Corn, I leave to the Judgment of the Reader.

From Bishop Fleetwood's Account before refer'd to, it appears that the Price of Wheat, at a Medium, declined twelve Shillings and Eight-pence per Quarter within forty-three Years after the Bounty took Place. A glorious Proof of the national Benefit of the Bounty, from the Increase of Tillage, which it encouraged! And by the Way it is observable, that the great Rise of Rents commenced in that Period of Time, tho' it must be universally acknowledged that Lands are since considerably further advanced, and 'tis as evident that Corn is also become much cheaper. The Author of the afore-mentioned Pamphlet adds,

that if the Prices of Barley and other Corn had been stated in the Bishop's Account, he is satisfy'd they would also appear to be considerably lower'd since the Bounty, which is acknowledging it to be the Effect of the Bounty, and supporting my Argument.

Notwithstanding the good Effects of the Bounty are so apparent, the Gentleman with whom I am here more directly contending, calls it, " A fatal " Mistake in our Laws, and that if it had not " retarded its Progress, we might have found at " this Time the Price of Corn lower, and the " Value of Lands higher, than can easily be ima- " gined ;" but this is strangely contrary to the Account just now refer'd to of Bishop *Fleetwood's*.

— That the Price of Corn has gradually declined since the Bounty is undeniable, and I think it is as evident that Lands cannot be so much worth without the Bounty ; and in my Opinion, it is the Reputation of the Bounty which is the Cause of the constant Plenty of Corn in *England* ; for this encourages the Farmer to sow largely, and to lay in a good Stock, in full Expectation of a Dealer to take it off before spoiled ; and thus there are no great Fluctuations in the Prices of Corn, as there were in the Days of our Fore-Fathers, according as their Fears were raised or abated concerning the Stock in the Kingdom, and as there often are in Foreign Nations, where this salutary Law is wanting, which is the Support of the

Staff of Life. From whence then is our Condition in this Respect so much happier than that of our Fore-Fathers, that we have now always Stocks of Corn in the Kingdom for our own Security, and withal enough to make it one of the most considerable Branches of our foreign Trade : I say from what Source is this happy Change, but originally from the Bounty, which has encouraged the Plough, made us a Corn-Country, and one of the chief Granaries of *Europe*? Must not then the withdrawing the Bounty have a contrary Effect, and may it not be expected to lessen by Degrees, according as the Continuance thereof has gradually increased the Benefits ? Therefore I cannot conceive how it is possible for the Discontinuance of the Bounty to promote the same Ends, as the Continuance of it has done with respect to the further Increase of the Value of Lands, and reducing the Price of Corn ; for such an Alteration must evidently tend to discourage Tillage. And here I beg Leave to cite what a celebrated *Spanish* Author, quoted in the Gentleman's Magazine, Vol 22. Page 465. has observed of the Bounty granted in *England* on Corn exported : Whereupon he says, speaking of Great-Britain, " That Prince and his Parliament apprehend this same Encouraging Bounty to be the Thing that secures Plenty for the ensuing Years ; and they support their Policy both with Arguments that, in all Appearance, are very well grounded, and with a repeated Ex-

" perience of having never felt a Famine in that  
 " Country ever since this Law was first enacted."  
 And surely Means to keep a Famine out of the  
 Country, is the wilest and best Policy of any  
 Prince. Therefore it is evident, that the Gentle-  
 man is wholly mistaken to say, the Bounty is a  
 Prejudice to our Manufactures; for, on the con-  
 trary, it undoubtedly is the very Life and Sup-  
 port of them, and the Increase of them may be  
 fairly deduced from the Bounty which has lessen'd  
 the Price of Corn. The Gentleman supporting  
 his Argument only upon the present Effect that  
 the withdrawing the Bounty, and stopping the  
 Exportation may have to lower the Price of Corn,  
 does not consider the ill Consequences that soon  
 must follow, by removing such an Encouragement  
 to Tillage; for certain it is, that any Check of that  
 Sort will by Degrees subject us to a general Dearth  
 and Scarcity, and that must inevitably ruin our  
 Manufactures. Accidental Changes in the Price  
 of Provisions there must always of Necessity be,  
 if from no other Cause than the Difference of our  
 own Crops at Home; and the Gentleman is quite  
 wrong to imagine the Exportation of Corn causes  
 any permanent Advance of the Price, for large  
 Demands of Corn are not permanent, and there-  
 fore it is that the Exportation (tho' a Paradox to  
 some) makes it cheap at Home; for our Lands  
 being greatly improv'd, People sow all they can  
 upon the Presumption of an Exportation, which  
 otherwise there would not be Encouragement to  
 do;

do; and as the foreign Demand is precarious, for it often happens that we have large Stocks in the Kingdom, and little or no Vent for them. The Price of Corn may indeed, for a Season advance, thro' the Heat of Speculation for foreign Markets, as is the Case more or less in all other Merchandizes; but Experience proves that Corn is dear for any Continuance only, when the Crop has proved very light at Home: A Deficiency this way will soon over Balance the largest Exportation ever known, and the Farmer must at such a Time sell his Corn at a dearer Rate, or he cannot pay his Rent. When we have a plentiful Crop, Corn is, and will be cheap, and large Stocks left even after the greatest Exportation; so that to say the Exportation of Corn occasions any permanent advance of the Price, is absolutely wrong; encouraged by the Bounty, it evidently appears to be the surest Means of our Plenty. It has been proved to be the only Cause that has greatly reduced the Price at Home, and must consequently still promote the same End; and it is further evident from the State and Nature of the Trade, that there are often such Alterations at the Markets Abroad, as reduce Corn extremely low at Home.—From all these it appears how erroneous the vulgar Ideas are, of sending Corn out of the Kingdom.

The Gentleman expresses much Concern for Encouragements to Industry, and so far he is to be

be commended ; but his Scheme to me appears very inconsistent ; for as the withdrawing the Bounty must lessen or destroy the Corn-Trade, so it must greatly diminish the Means of employing the Poor, which cannot promote Industry. Nor can I conceive any Advantage to the Labourer, by lessening his Expences on one Hand, in order that his Wages may be reduced in the same Proportion on the other, for then the Account will be balanced, and Industry be continued on her old Footing. Besides, I believe it may be generally acknowledged, that Industry is more seated in the Dispositions than in the outward Advantages of Mankind. And the Gentleman in his first Letter has acknowledged it to be the general Complaint of the Trader, that the Workmen proportion their Labour to their Necessities. As there is now so great Plenty of Money in the Kingdom, so the Value of it is depress'd, and Labour consequently become more expensive ; which is an Argument of the Necessity of such Means as a Bounty to carry our Commodities to foreign Markets still at a reasonable Price. And there appears no better Means to increase or support the Riches of the Nation, than to allow Bounties on the Exportation of all our Commodities raised at Home, in which we can be rivaled.

The Conclusions which the Gentleman draws in his Second Letter, from the Bounty on Corn exported ; " That it is prejudicial to the general State

" State of Trade; of no Advantage to the  
 " Farmer or Land-Owner; that it neither in-  
 " creases our Shipping, nor adds to our naval  
 " Strength; that it impoverishes the Nation,  
 " checks the Progress of our Manufactures,  
 " stops the Improvements of our Lands, and de-  
 " stroys by Degrees the Employment of our  
 " Shipping;" are so very extraordinary, so re-  
 pugnant to Reason and common Experience, so  
 notoriously absurd in every Respect, that I can  
 scarce help esteeming them ironically intended.  
 The Fallacy of these Conclusions must appear, I  
 think, to every sensible Enquirer. His following  
 Argument against our Act of Navigation is no  
 better, which he presumes to treat also as a Dis-  
 advantage to the Nation, calling it a Monopoly,  
 and would have it free and open to all Foreigners.  
 'Tis happy that there is, as he acknowledges, a  
 general Prejudice against him in this Point; for to  
 follow his Scheme, would be to make the Interest  
 of the World common with respect to Naviga-  
 tion. His Notions of Monopolies are very un-  
 common and remarkable. A Monopoly by In-  
 dividuals of any Branch of Trade may be a Preju-  
 dice to their Fellow Subjects, but is still of Be-  
 nefit to such Individuals, therefore national Mo-  
 nopolies must be national Advantages. But the  
 Gentleman particularly asks me to shew how a  
 Monopoly to our own People at Sea, can be of  
 Service to our Navigation and foreign Trade; to  
 which I answer, that it is our Act of Navigation  
 which

which encourages our own, and prevents the employing foreign Shipping, that has render'd us so formidable at Sea.

The Gentleman does not seem to think that to employ our Subjects at Sea is so advantageous or so worthy of Consideration, as at Land; but there is undoubtedly more than a double Advantage by employing a Subject at Sea, and no kind of Profit is so national as that of Freightage.---He does not consider the wide Difference between our paying Freightage to Foreigners and our own Subjects, which is a grand and important Affair, and withal, by the Means of sending out our own ship-pings they often get Freights in foreign Ports, and earn Money from Strangers, the Sweets of which the Dutch have long felt. To give a further Illustration of the great Use of the Act of Navigation, suppose, a British Ship demands of Great Britain Five Pounds for the same Freight which a Foreigner would carry for Four; to save the one Pound, she employs the Foreigner, and for ever loses the four Pounds; her own Ship besides is laid up and rots, and the Sailors discharg'd, run away into foreign Countries for Bread, and perhaps fight against her another Day? But to prevent this Evil, she abates one Pound in her Profit, or grants a Bounty upon certain Goods loaded in her own Ship, which is the same Thing, (and which by the Way is not lost to her) to make her Merchandises as cheap Abroad as if the Foreigner carry'd

carry'd them to here she saves four Pounds for Freight by employing her own Ship, and keeps her Sailors at Home against a Day of Need, without the Trouble of Registering them, as in former Times, which would likewise be attended with vast Expence. This suffices to shew that the Navigation Act is the Palladium of the British Marine, and the best Support of our Riches and Strength; for the Case is the same whether it is one Ship or one Thousand, four Seamen or forty Thousand, four Pounds or four Million, and this also justifies the Bounty on exported Corn, for there is not any one Branch of our foreign Trade so beneficial to the Navigation Interest, the Bounty being well and wisely confin'd to the Employment of our own Shipping—Tis a bulky Commodity, and therefore employs the more Vessels. It is very evident that the Corn Trade has lately surprisingly increased the Number of our Shipping in all the little Ports upon the Coast, and if there be an Increase of Shipping, there must also be a greater Increase of Seamen, which all agrees to be the best Security of the Kingdom.—These Shipping have their sole Dependance upon the Corn Trade, and when any Stagnation happens, the Consequences are soon evidently experienced by the Mariners, and by the Tradesmen and Merchants, which in great Numbers are Dependant on them ashore. To what Distress then must they be reduced if the Bounty be withdrawn,

for Corn might then be loaded on foreign Ships as well as our own, and a Preference would be given to them, because they will carry it for less Freight than ours, and this would be a fatal Stroke to our Navigation?

The Gentleman in his last Letter intimates a Suspicion, that the Bounty could not have arisen to the Sum it has lately done without considerable Frauds. This seems a kind of *dernier Resort*, and I can understand it only as a malicious Design to prejudice the Minds of the People. 'Tis an Argument that he is but little sensible of the Quantities of Corn our Island produces; and it is an ungenerous Reflection upon the Care which the Parliament has made to prevent Abuses of this Kind. If he will but examine the Duty of Officers, and what is required from the Merchant and Master of the Ship, he will find that all Corn for Exportation is shipp'd under the Care of a Searcher, Surveyor, and Land-waiter; and that the Merchant and Master both make Oath to the Quantity, and join in a Bond of almost double the Value of the Bounty; and that therefore there can be no room for such Suspicions; besides, the Burthen of the Ship is generally too well known to suppose the Possibility of any Fraud in the Bounty considerable enough to tempt the Parties to so desperate an Undertaking; and as such a Proceeding could neither easily be conducted

without

without the Knowledge, in some Measure, of the Mariners aboard, so it is hard to conceive that it could pass without Discovery. If the Officers were dishonest, and the Merchants and Captains would palpably forswear themselves, and risk the Penalties to be incur'd, we might sometimes hear of Impositions of this Sort; but I believe such Attempts have been very rare and very few, and that never any pass'd undetected; yet if the Minds of any incline to such Iniquity, let them be duly punish'd; that does not invalidate the Necessity and Benefits of the Bounty, for we may see others of our best and most salutary Laws abused in some Shape or other. The Conclusion which the Gentleman draws from this Head is however very strange and remarkable, that the Nation is in a better Situation both for the Seamen and Farmers, tho' cheated in such a Manner, than if all the Money had been fairly apply'd, because, says he; the less of our Corn has been exported; but if that be true, then a total Prohibition of the Exportation must be still better, and what will become then of the Labourer, Farmer, Seaman, and Land-owner, and even of our Manufactures too, for which the Gentleman pretends so much Concern—For I think it is plain, that a Check to the Exportation of Corn, must be a Check to the Tillage of it, and that must affect them all; and we cannot more effectually starve ourselves, than by striving to starve Foreigners! The Far-

ther undoubtably depends much on the Exportation of Corn ; and if it be hard and difficult Times with him, it is observed to be so likewise with the Labourer, Tradesman, and all the Country, their Interest being closely connected together.

The Gentleman hints to some other Regulation of the Bounty, that it may not be granted when the Cheapness of Corn here affords sufficient Encouragement to export it without : But who shall determine this ? I suppose he imagines that when our Corn is at a very low Price, there is no Need of the Bounty ; but he don't consider that it may be as proportionably cheap Abroad. It has been known that *France*, and other Countries by Turns, have not needed Supplies from us for many Years together, so that the Bounty is still necessary in Times of Cheapness, else our Corn must be kept at Home and be spoiled, for our Plenty often happens when there is no great Demand for it Abroad.—Our Laws have already limitted the Bounty within a certain and fixed Price, and when Corn is dear at Home, it will seldom answer to export it.

The Gentleman speaking of the Connection of the different Parts of our Island, endeavours to make it appear, that the Mischiefs of the Bounty being felt first in the Inland Parts of the Kingdom, its Effects must soon follow on the Sea Coasts.

Coasts. But I hope it is sufficiently demonstrated, that both have great Advantages from the Bounty. This withdrawing it would indeed immediately be felt on the Sea Coasts, the Corn Trade being almost their only Dependance, and would reduce the Borders of the Kingdom to extreme Poverty; and I think it also plainly appears, that the Loss of the Corn Trade must verily affect the Inland Countries and Manufactures, by the Apprehensions of approaching Dearth and Scarcity, and which may soon follow. 'Tis too hard a Task for the Gentleman to prove the Influence of the Bounty destructive to our Marine, tho' he still insists thereon, because it is very evident that the Corn Trade has vastly increased, and still does, the Number of our Shipping.

The latter Part of the Gentleman's first Letter being quite beside the Question, was the Reason of my taking no Notice of it. I confess, if he had offer'd as cogent Argument against the Bounty on Corn, as he has for an universal Freedom of Workmen, I should have been silent, but hope what I have said will convince him, and satisfy the World of his Mistakes on this Account, viz. That the Bounty is not given to Foreigners, but secures to us the Trade: That we should Export but little Corn without it: That there are other Corn Countries valling us: That those where it is generally demanded may be forced

to Means to grow their own Supplies : That it encourages the Plough; improves and raises the Value of our Lands; is the Means of keeping larger Stocks of Cattle; and enables the Farmer to pay advanced Rents, occasions large Stocks of Corn to be kept in the Kingdom; which reduces the Price at Home, and is therefore the Life and Support of the Manufactures : That it Increases our Inhabitants, and is the Means of employing more Subjects than any other Branch of Trade : Brings immense Sums of Money into the Kingdom ; increases our Shipping ; keeps our Sailors in our own Service , is the Means of their getting Freightage in Foreign Ports, and discourages the Marine of other Nations.—And the withdrawing the Bounty must have all the contrary Effects.

I shall now leave the Writers against the Bounty to the Enjoyment of their own Sentiments, hoping our Legislature will esteem it not only as the surest human Security against a Famine, but as the Source of a Golden Mine dug out of the Surface of Great Britain, with more Health and Pleasure than those of America, and as inexhaustible.

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